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*...the future of women's emancipation and the future of the family is quite unclear.*

*...To view this...in the long perspective of two centuries may help Americans to make the personal and social decisions the immediate future seems to have in store for us. To understand how one has arrived at the present point not only is a purpose of history but is also a good way to begin to face up to a choice.*

--Carl Degler

## History and Family Policy

By Professor Robert L. Griswold, Department of History, University of Oklahoma

The last decade has witnessed an enormous expansion in the field of family history. Household structure, marriage patterns, kinship ties, sex roles, affective relations, and more have all come under the the historians' focus. In part this expansion came because of the feminist movement — the study of women led quite naturally to the study of the family — in part because of an interest in the lives of everyday citizens — part of the expansion of the historical purview in general — and in part because of claims made in the 1960's about the relationship between the family and poverty. Regardless of the reasons, we now know a great deal about the family in past time.

But whether historical research can help illuminate contemporary problems remains to be seen. Historians are much better at pointing out long range trends, subtle paradoxes, and troubling dilemmas than they are at proffering solutions to contemporary problems. In fact, perhaps it is not the business of historians to offer solutions; perhaps exploring trends, paradoxes, and dilemmas is enough. Nevertheless, it appears, to my mind, absolutely essential that a body such as this have some sense of the history of the family. Until people in general and policy makers in particular have a solid understanding of the history of the family, comparisons between today's alleged weaknesses and yesterday's alleged strengths of the family will be superficial and misinformed.

Historians can play an important role in illuminating family relationships in the past, in breaking down misguided assumptions about past family life, and in revealing that the family has changed in the past and will change in the future. Before we talk, then, about the decline of the extended family, let us establish whether or not such an institution existed in the past; before we casually assess the sta-



Geoffrey Moss — political illustrator syndicated with the Washington Post Writers Group

bility of the 18th or 19th century family, let us determine whether or not such stability was, in fact, extant.

In short, the task of the historian is to supply perspective, to clarify how the family has changed over time, how expectations regarding men's and women's roles have altered, and how the position of children and parents has or has not changed from earlier centuries to the present. Then, when we examine a particular policy issue — for example, who should speak for the family or what the responsibilities of family members should

be to each other — we see immediately that the rising status of women and children in the family since the late 18th century clearly bears directly on the policy issue at hand.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The historical literature on family structure, marriage patterns, divorce, and so forth is sizable. Perhaps the most dramatic change in family structure is the large decline in family size from the late 18th century to the present. The implications of this change have by no means

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## Value and the American Family

By Dorothy Reed  
Editor, Humanities Network

Is the American family an endangered species? Until recently, family membership was reputed to embody the dearest values of people in a society — pride in ancestry, ambition for progeny, motivation for individual success. Now the media are full of evidence of the family's decline, and many people are troubled. Some recommend protective legislation to support the family, while others consider that the intrusion of government into the last bastion of privacy for the over-regulated American would be the final touch in driving the family out of business.

What, exactly, constitutes a family these days is a matter of dispute, and groups are experimenting with other ways to provide the nurturing traditionally found in the nuclear family. After all, in Huxley's *Brave New World* babies are created in test tubes and raised in laboratories; liaisons between adults serve only recreational and therapeutic purposes.

Several CCH-sponsored projects recently have addressed aspects of the family's welfare; one in particular was held in anticipation of a White House Conference on the family held earlier this year. Aimed primarily at delegates to the convention, it provided perspectives from history, literature and ethics on the problems of the family, as well as insights from professionals in various family service fields. Participants sought a consensus among persons concerned about the family as to what, if any, the role of government should be.

It should be pointed out, perhaps, as Jim Guy Tucker, keynote speaker of the conference suggested, that the freedom of families from government influence is an illusion. Outside the context of the United States, and from a somewhat primitive point of view, the family structure was the means by which a tribe's integrity was maintained through future generations and the inheritance of power within the society was assured. As such, tribal elders often found every detail of personal, sexual, and family relationships a suit-

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# Literature, Responsibility and the Family

By Professor Benjamin Saltman, Department of English, California State University, Northridge

"What responsibility should family members have to each other?" In a sense this is easily answered: I know I am responsible to my four-year-old daughter for keeping the refrigerator full of carrots, apples, and oranges. But it gets complicated when I approach this question from the standpoint of literature and the popular arts, since neither presents a unified opinion about what is right or wrong about it.

Here and there they provide insight into family life but they don't really offer solutions to problems. They explore. Writers are sensitive to society's dreams and fears, they dramatize the tensions of relationships, they project society's sense of itself, and so they do have something to say about family responsibility.

Family responsibility has a role in some respectable literary works: *Oedipus the King*, *Hamlet*, *War and Peace*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Ulysses*. On the other hand, family is by no means the central preoccupation of literature. After all, the story ends when the hero marries. Dante walked from hell to heaven unaccompanied by his family. There are indeed many works in which the family is only incidental or the hero belongs to a surrogate family — a team or group.

This weakened role of the family is especially evident today. It seems that we become more and more a society of individuals. The 20th Century has been preoccupied with the fostering and protection of the individual; we hear more about individual rights than about family rights. So in the world as well as in literature we have on one side the family and on the other the individual or group. And when it comes to the question of responsibility there is a kind of war between family values and the values characteristic of individuals or groups.

This uneasy relationship cuts right through our culture — shall we watch *Starsky and Hutch* or shall we watch *The Waltons*? For every literary work like *The*

*Grapes of Wrath* which centers on family, numerous others like *On The Road* or *Waiting for Godot* focus on the individual or group.

In the family-centered work we find the challenge of responsibility and survival in terms of relationships; in the individual or group-centered work we find the challenge of self-discovery or group development. This division, as I have said, is a reflection of our society at large. A simple illustration of the problem may be found in the housing issue which surfaced recently: the discrimination against families in favor of adults-only apartments and condos. Adults-only housing could well be called adolescents-only housing, since what is offered are jacuzzis, game rooms, tennis courts, hot tubs — in short, a milieu suited to overgrown children and adolescents from which real children and adolescents are excluded. By implication there is a war between the needs of the family and the right to self-development of the individual.

The rights of individuals rather than of families have been in the ascendance. From every side we hear how hard it is to be married. If film and television are accurate, it's easier to belong to the Dallas Cowboys or to a SWAT team. In recent years the media have been filled with family substitutes — team or group narratives. The team or group narrative has long been a staple of adolescent literature and popular arts.

I grew up on *The Three Musketeers* and team adventure films of the thirties like *Gunga Din* or *Lives of the Bengal Lancers*. Today films like *The Wild Bunch*, *The Sting*, and *North Dallas Forty* continue a tradition in which team or group members relate to each other like children or at best like teenagers, their only dignity conferred by violence.

These surrogate families are teams of astronauts, groups of cowboys, teams of athletes, groups of high school students or college classmates; their values have

frozen at an adolescent level, their identities develop in response to a goal, their emotional relationships remain uneasy and vague replicas of parent-child and sibling relationships, underdeveloped and impoverished.

The home lives of these astronauts, athletes, cowboys, and policemen are presented, if presented at all, as simple deterrents to the proper pursuit of the game, the fight, the money, the war. This literature appeals to the child in us and its unusually large place in our society is a warning. If we crave *Charlie's Angels*, *Love Boat* or *Fantasy Island*, even reassuring family shows like *The Brady Bunch* or *The Jeffersons* may only highlight the crisis facing the family.

There is, fortunately, literature about the family which places issues in perspective. An issue before the White House Conference on the family is that of the family and cultural pluralism. What impact does cultural pluralism have upon the question of responsibility within the family? What insight does Literature provide?

First of all, in order to answer this question we must distinguish between cultural pluralism as an issue *between* families and cultural pluralism as an issue *within* families. Writers have dealt with conflicts between groups and families, in works like *Roots*, *Zoot Suit*, and *West Side Story*, but the more revealing literature explores the effects of cultural pluralism within the family.

*Black Boy* by Richard Wright is a classic about growing up in the South and deals with tensions within a black family, resulting from the struggle between blacks and whites. In *Black Boy* young Richard is repressed and even oppressed by his parents and grandparents in order to prepare him to survive in a white world. If he is bright or spirited he will suffer or perhaps be destroyed at the hands of the whites. In order to protect him his parents act out on him the very

values they detest and which have been acted out on them. They hope the boy will thus survive growing up in a hostile environment.

Wright implies that we cannot discuss the responsibility of one family member to another outside the social complex in which that family lives; the impact of the society upon the family may divide it internally. The issue is not whether responsibility exists but what it means. How can one be responsible? Should courage be fostered or repressed? Should the young man learn to be deceptive at the cost of his inner integrity?

Until such values are clarified, the problem of responsibility cannot properly arise. Richard struggles between a desire to develop himself and face the world forthrightly and a need to act discreetly in order to survive. In the end he lives through the conflict, learns to recognize the way his parents' love reveals itself in repression, and discovers the truth about the white world he naively wanted to challenge.

The issue of cultural pluralism is thus more than the fight of group against group. It means dissension in the family, as a story by Philip Roth clearly illustrates. In "Eli the Fanatic," Eli Peck is a Jew living with his wife in a small New York town whose Jews have quietly assimilated into the Protestant American community. Into that community, however, comes an Orthodox Jewish school, a Yeshiva, together with the black coats, black hats, and beards and sidelocks of Orthodox tradition.

The newcomers are an embarrassment to the assimilated and accepted Jews. Although Eli himself is assimilated, he is attracted to the Orthodox Jews, reminders of the Jewish past and of an identity and community he misses. His wife who is pregnant with their first child cannot understand his desire to identify with Orthodoxy — such behavior threatens their status in the community and Eli's

## History and Family Policy

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been fully explored, but I will suggest some in a moment. For white women who completed their fertility, the average number of children per family fell from 7.04 in 1800 to somewhere around 2.00 today.

Why this decline occurred is less clear, but various explanations have been offered. Some have tied the decline to economic factors; for example, one writer suggests that the fall in the birthrate correlated with a decline in available arable land. As available land declined, so too did family size because fathers realized that a large number of children could not possibly be settled on nearby land. Other historians have argued that the reason is industrialization, specifically, that children in an industrial, urban setting are a liability rather than an asset and that industry requires a small, mobile, adaptable labor force unburdened by complex kin ties. Still others argue that the decline in family size is related to the rising eco-

nomic expectations and desires of an urban middle class.

More recent interpretations emphasize changes in values rather than economics. They explain the fall in the birthrate primarily by a change in the values of those who bear children — that is, a change in the values of women. Professor Carl Degler has developed this argument in his new book on women and the family since the American Revolution. In his view, the decline in childbirth is inextricably linked to a change in family values and — more directly — to a change in the position of women within the family. I will speak more on family values in a few minutes; for now, the important point is that Degler sees women as actively seeking and finding greater autonomy within the nineteenth-century family. Part of this search for autonomy included women's desire to gain control over their own fertility, to end the painful and debilitating cycle of pregnancy,

birth, pregnancy, birth.

What all this means is not clear, but the evidence does suggest that people's purposeful efforts to shape family composition and to change family values are of long standing. Today, some people are alarmed by the decline in the size of the American family; to such worriers, it brings no consolation but perhaps some understanding to realize that this is a long process and, if Degler is correct, a process linked directly to the improving status of women in the family.

Not only has the size of the family declined, but childbearing years have been cut dramatically, from about 20 years in the late 18th century to about 10 years today. As a result, as Robert Wells has pointed out, parents find themselves at far younger ages with no children at home. Almost 40 years elapsed before a woman born in the 18th century might expect to see all her children gone; today, women are free of childrearing duties with-

thin 20-25 years of marriage.

This fact has created new possibilities, but surely new tensions as well. Here we see how a long range demographic trend has created a social issue of major importance. In the last decade, and in conjunction with the rise of the feminist movement, attention has been directed to the life situation of relatively young women whose families have grown up and left the home.

Colleges, in fact, already have a bureaucratic term for them, a fact I learned when a colleague remarked that one of my students was in the "re-entry" category. This demographic change certainly invites state intervention — whether one accepts the legitimacy of intervention depends upon one's politics; but clearly the 19th century demographic trend toward smaller families has created a large number of women who want careers, education, and personal satisfaction after their children leave home. → →





career as a lawyer. She sees his responsibility as focused not upon ancient heritage but upon present well-being and the child-to-be. She wants only peace.

"Oh, Eli," she says looking at his Orthodox garments, "sweetheart, why do you feel guilty about everything? Eli, change your clothes. I forgive you." But Eli won't change clothes; his attraction to ancient identity is too great, and ultimately his effort to bridge the gap between two worlds, the old and the new, leads to emotional breakdown. Philip Roth's story reveals first how a problem of cultural pluralism develops within an ethnic group — a struggle between Jews who adapt to a dominant culture and Jews who want to retain distinct ethnic identity. As a result, both the family and the individual within the family are confused about who or what they are. Finally, Roth suggests that the proper responsibility of a parent to his child may be an effort to pass on a definite heritage based on culture and tradition, and not an effort to assure the acceptance of his child into the society at large.

If divergent cultural concepts of duty drive a family apart, financial need, fear, or love may keep it together. In the case of love especially, divided values may threaten but still may not destroy the family. Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* portrays brothers Augie and Simon March who differ radically in values. While Simon is money oriented, dedicated to power, Augie seeks personal development in a life of adventure and love. Yet in spite of antagonistic values the two brothers retain a loving loyalty to each other.

Another example of the power of love appears in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, in which a mother of strong will and exceptional tolerance keeps her family together in spite of economic threat and cultural division. Although the daughter of the family is enthralled by the ego-enhancing value of association with African culture, she does not go off in search of her roots — love prevails. In Bellow and Hansberry cultural pluralism becomes entangled with economic questions and with diverse values of the past and present. Though love prevails in *Augie* and *Raisin in the Sun*, even the po-

wer of love may be insufficient under corrosive economic and cultural forces.

In William Faulkner's novel *The Sound and the Fury*, the shifting culture of the South creates intolerable divisions within the Compson family. The father becomes an alcoholic, withdrawing into an aristocratic haze; the mother is neurotic; one child is an idiot; others fall victim to materialistic or super-romantic values: the destruction of the family is tragically inevitable as each effort to save the family destroys it.

Serious writers sometimes seem more interested in telling us what cannot be done about family problems than what we can do. They warn us not to be simplistic, not to imagine that mechanical remedies will work. In fact they reject remedies which do not touch fundamental values.

Faulkner, for example, would have laughed at an assertion that in *The Sound and the Fury*, the Compson's problem was economics. The problem was values, values, values. In short, behind the economic problem is a value problem; behind the problem of violence is a value problem. These problems are not solved by an effort to adjust the family to the values of the larger society. The larger society may be the source of the difficulty in which case the representatives of society only compound the problems.

Perhaps unjustly, the writers see the social representatives of adjustment as superficial and mechanical. The social worker is ridiculous in Herb Gardner's *A Thousand Clowns* and in Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*. Psychologists and psychiatrists appear to be charlatans or fools in Bellow's *Seize the Day*, Salinger's *Franny and Zooey*, Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying*, and Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Such representatives of social agencies or helping professions are insensitive, we are told, to the complex internal struggles and tensions of the family.

Whether this insensitivity exists or not, the popular arts are, by contrast, much happier with social professions than the writers I have been citing. The popular media will usually be found to support the police, medical officers, or even, in the case of *Quincy*, the coroner. These

social professionals solve problems, separate the bad eggs from the family, or put family members neatly back together. The media's evidence of social concern together with other reassurance in a range of family shows, like *Little House on the Prairie*, *Different Strokes*, or *One Day at a Time*, seems to tell us that the family was never healthier.

But in spite of such reassurances, there are signs of family breakdown even in the popular forms. I have already alluded to the rise of family alternatives in what I have called the team or group narrative. I'll go into that further here. Team films and television dramas include *Charlie's Angels*, *Laverne and Shirley*, *Barney Miller*, *Lou Grant*, *The Long Riders*, *All The President's Men*, *Star Trek* (to suggest the variety and prevalence of this type).

The values of these productions, even the more mature ones like *Barney Miller* or *Lou Grant*, are essentially adolescent; Barney Miller and Lou Grant, for example, are father figures overseeing a host of kids, who are the police and reporters of their several trades. The relationships between the members of these groups point essentially to the immature world of *American Graffiti* and *Gilligan's Island*.

A second sign of family breakdown revealed by the popular arts is exemplified by programs like *All in the Family*, *Soap*, and *The Ropers*; a variety of divergences underscores the impossibility of continuing in the real world.

A last sign of family breakdown I will mention here appears in the recent surge of demonic children in theater and television films. Beginning with *Rosemary's Baby* and followed, for example, by *The Exorcist I and II*, *The Omen I and II*, *The Other*, *Carrie*, and *The Demon Seed*, these films imply that the family is incapable of dealing with its members. What kind of responsibility can one exercise over a supernatural child? (Any child who can make his head turn in a complete circle is going to be tough to handle). Whatever cultural sickness these child demon films may imply, the flood of such films is a statement that the family cannot successfully organize or control itself.

Reviewing literature and the popular arts, I have sought to clarify themes and

issues of concern to those who worry about the family. Although cultural pluralism as a problem seems central to a number of writers, it should be evident that the question of values appears in other contexts as well. Let me conclude this survey by exploring one other work for a problem of values other than cultural pluralism. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, a play which Miller called a tragedy of the common man, is a family play. It concerns Willy Loman, his wife, and his two sons. The values of the Loman family are basically not divided; there is no tension between ethnic groups or social class. The Lomans have similar ideas about their responsibility to each other, and they do not lack love for each other. Then what is wrong? What is the tragedy?

The tragedy is that of false or unrealistic values. Willy Loman, the spokesman of the family, believes in success and is convinced that success depends upon personal charm, connections, and talent. He convinces his sons that popularity is more valuable to them than hard work, with the result that his son Biff becomes a petty thief and ultimately a wanderer, and his other son Happy becomes a flatterer, a wine salesman full of false pretense. Willy himself cannot face his own failure, he cannot substitute anything for success. Even his loving wife collaborates in supporting Willy's self deception. At the end, Willy's suicide is the consequence not simply of failure but of his inability to acknowledge the hollowness and inadequacy of his life, the falseness of his values.

The pressure on the Loman family is only partly economic; the failure is more profoundly the distance between Willy's hopes and his chances. At the conclusion of the play, Biff, standing at his father's grave, says of Willy: "He had the wrong dreams, all wrong. . . the man didn't know who he was."

Our values are our dreams of how to live. Serious writers like Arthur Miller do not take lightly the practical problems facing the family, but remind us that behind the overt issues of housing, economics, health care, and so on, are the issues of our dreams.

While parents today face a longer time together with no children at home, parents also face a longer time period together. Increases in life expectancy from the 19th to the 20th century have meant that the average length of marriages (uninterrupted by divorce) has increased. Prior to 1800, wives and husbands could expect their unions to be broken by death before all children left home; today wives and husbands can expect 20 years together after the children are gone. The increase in longevity, the decline in fertility, and the earlier end to childrearing, therefore, mean that old age without family present is today the norm; in the early 19th century, it was the exception.

And should one spouse die relatively young, the widow or widower also faces the prospect of years alone, unless remarriage should occur. Again, a demographic trend dating from the 19th century has policy implications for today. The so-called "graying of America" even received

cover story treatment by Newsweek Magazine. The policy questions are complex, but the fact remains that there is a sizable number of older citizens — many poor, single, and on fixed incomes — who may need the support of the state in order to maintain their precarious existence.

Let me turn to a different demographic issue. The composition of households also reveals points of importance. One basic finding should be underscored; research has shown the statistical predominance of the nuclear family as far back as the 17th century in America. The extended family — the family with three generations in it — was the historical exception; rarely more than 1/5 of the families were extended in nature. Thus social theories built on the myth of the extended family need to be revised. The utopia of three generations living happily side-by-side was the statistical exception and far less common than the nuclear form.

My point should be clear. Contrasting today's nuclear family with a mythical extended family — and suggesting that social policy should somehow reflect the reality of this shift — is not only bad policy but bad history!

Historical demography also supplies a fresh perspective on divorce, surely of concern to anyone thinking about the contemporary family. The interesting point is that although the divorce rate has risen dramatically — from 1890 to 1970 the number of divorces per 1000 existing marriages rose from about one to 15 per year — the number of disrupted marriages each year has remained about the same. How can this be? Because, as Robert Wells has shown, the rise in divorce almost exactly balanced out improvements in life expectancy so that the percentage of marriages being ended in any single year was almost the same in 1970 as in 1890. As historian Lawrence Stone has remarked, divorce may

simply be the functional equivalent of mortality.

This comparison might temper our judgments about the newness of marital instability today. Marriages were unstable in the past, too, but for different reasons. Mortality did in the 19th century what divorce does in the 20th century. This is not, of course, to suggest that the psychological pain is the same, only that marital instability is nothing new.

Another observation about divorce deserves mention, a point that will lead to my second major section about changing values in the family. Paradoxically, they also suggest the intensification of demands within the family. Historian William O'Neill has argued that divorce is the safety valve that makes the modern family possible. As the emotional importance of the family has grown while its other functions have declined, divorce has become a necessity.





## History and Family Policy

According to Professor Carl Degler, divorce is an integral part of the emotionally intense companionate system but an essential feature of that system. If this analysis is correct, if divorce is necessary to the system, if divorce is part and parcel of a century-long transformation of the family, then efforts by the state to promote family stability will probably be ineffective.

This point should be doubly true if this analysis is linked to the emergence of feminism since the early to mid 1960's. Divorce, in Degler and O'Neill's view, functions as a necessary component of the emotion-filled modern family; surely, divorce serves the same function in relation to women's drive for satisfaction outside the family. Egalitarian marriages and equal political and economic rights for husbands and wives require a safety valve when the individualistic goals of women clash with those of men.

If the state has a role to play here, perhaps it is in providing necessary services for children and their single parents. Above all, the historical evidence suggests that the divorce rate is not likely to abate dramatically unless there is a major shift in values, a shift that is probably unacceptable to most modern thinkers' attitudes about the family.

### CHANGING VALUES IN THE FAMILY

Let me turn to my second major concern. Many historians have examined value changes in the family; the consensus is that the 19th century witnessed the rise of the modern family. Though some push the roots back to the Enlightenment, to Puritanism, or to the Reformation, all agree that the 19th century is key. What emerged in that century was what has been called the companionate family. This theory rejects the stereotypical view of the 19th century family — that is, the Victorian home inhabited by a patriarchal, domineering husband and a pliant, submissive, docile wife — and replaces it with a view that emphasizes the mutual respect and affection within the 19th century family. The theory suggests that as the productive, educational, religious, and social functions of the family declined, emotion and love became the center of the family's function. Moreover, the companionate family included a rise in the status of women within the home; women expected husbands to treat them as coequals in the home, to converse with them more or less as equals, to ask their opinions on domestic matters, to spend their leisure time at home, and to respect their sexual desires. The key words to describe this new relationship are companionship, collaboration, and conjugal unity.

The evidence for this rejection of the Victorian stereotype comes from analyses based on advice literature, diaries, letters, memoirs, inferences from statistics, and divorce records. I place divorce records last, not without reason. My own research has been in 19th century Bay Area divorce records. From the court testimony and from statistical evidence, I conclude that the patriarchal stereotype is wrong. Rather than a submissive ideal for women, I found the records emphasized the

purposeful, socially useful, productive aspects of womanhood; rather than an emotional wasteland, I found 19th century marriages grounded on the emotional bond between men and women. Others, using different evidence, have come to similar conclusions.

My evidence also supports the argument that values changed in the 19th century regarding childhood and motherhood. Both became exceedingly important in the 19th century and represent another dimension of the companionate family. Today's emphasis on proper child nurture is, therefore, by no means new. The basic ideas about the worth of the child and about the malleable character of children were formulated in the early 19th century, if not before. Nineteenth-century writers underscored not the child's innate depravity — as in the Puritan conception — but his malleability; character was not inborn, but rather molded and shaped by parents. Both parents, but especially mothers, emerged as custodians of their child's emotional and intellectual well-being.

Clearly, the emphasis on childrearing today can be traced to the 19th century's concern for properly guiding children to maturity in an atmosphere suffused with parental love and affection.

If this analysis is correct, if the family has become more and more a companionate bond, if emphasis in the family centers on its emotional functions, then today's concern with building more egalitarian marriages is not new but rather the latest development in the emergence of the companionate family. This theory implies that in answer to the question, "Who should speak for the family?" the historical record suggests that both men and women should; moreover, they have already been wrestling with this egalitarian prescription for over 100 years.

The same point holds for the next question, "What should be the responsibilities of family members to each other?" Again, the companionate theory suggests that for over a century the advice has emphasized that men and women owe each other mutual love, understanding, emotional support, respect, consideration, and affection; children, too, deserve such sentiments.

The point cannot be overemphasized; today's emphasis on communication within the family, on building egalitarian marriages based on mutual respect, on recognizing the legitimate needs of men and women, is not new. It is, rather, over a century in the making; certainly the content of the demands has altered; certainly women today are more interested in pursuing careers; certainly more marriages will flounder today because of an inability to satisfy the needs of both partners; but the basic outlines were evident in the 19th century.

There are pessimistic implications for marital stability and families if the above argument is correct. If women's drive for autonomy and individualism is a key theme in the emergence of the modern family, if the family is truly an emotional hothouse, then marriages will continue to break up, and more and more people will choose not to marry. As Deg-

ler points out, the values of individualism and the values of family life are not compatible. The family is basically an anti-individualistic institution; it is not meritocratic; it is not democratic; it places the values to the group above those of the individual. Individualism, on the other hand, entails an emphasis on the pursuit of individual interests, on merit, on equality, and on democracy. Whether this clash of values can or should be circumvented or eradicated by state policies is questionable even if possible. Perhaps the state should simply recognize the inevitable — that individualism now pervades the family and makes marriage and family life very tenuous — and concentrate its efforts on providing necessary services — e.g. daycare — for non-traditional families.

### FAMILIES AS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH

But there is another side to the historical literature that is less pessimistic, less related to sweeping interpretations, and more concerned with the resilience and malleability of families. Historians who have looked at slave, immigrant, and working class families have stressed the durability of families. With today's emphasis on the fragility of family life, perhaps it is encouraging to find evidence that underscores the family's strength. Whether in rural, urban, free, or slave settings, whether in moving from rural Europe to industrial America, from rural Illinois to industrial Chicago, from slave Virginia to free Virginia, the family has served as a cushion, a resource, a haven, and a source of strength.

Herbert Gutman made this point in his study of the black family under slavery; despite the oppression of slave life, blacks forged a strong family life, a family life that endured the strains of the plantation. Studies of immigration show similar patterns. Immigrants confronted with new experiences and demands in America found strength in their families. Families were not, then, merely dependent variables in the face of urbanization and industrialization. Virginia McLaughlin found Italian immigrants maintaining traditional Old World family values within an advanced industrial city like Buffalo, New York. Family values in this case played an important role in determining work patterns; there was no immediate reorganization or demoralization of family life — rather an adjustment.

Others have found similar patterns. A study of a New Hampshire textile mill emphasized the adaptability of family life to work in a factory town. The corporation, in fact, hired entire families, thereby heightening the ease of recruitment, housing, and control of the labor force. Moreover, work in the factory continued earlier notions of the family as a productive unit. Workers even recruited their own kin for work; in short, as Tamara Hareven has argued, ethnic and kinship ties provided the major organizational scheme for the workers' adjustment to the pressures of industrial life. The ties of family and culture offered a common heritage, language, residential cohesion and religion to help make possible the adjustment to

a new life.

Perhaps this evidence reveals only a truism, that institutions adapt to change. But I think it reveals more than this; it reveals that the family is an independent variable; it shapes its own destiny and yet is also altered by the culture around it. There is no automatic adaptation, no simple fit. The family provides coherence to life, a set of values; it does not easily and simply abandon these values in the face of new circumstances.

### GOVERNMENT AND THE FAMILY

Let me turn to my final point. Historians have not dealt extensively with the relationship between the family and the state, but most literature that does address the question is very suspicious of state involvement in the family. The most searching critique among American historians has come from Christopher Lasch. In his book *Haven in a Heartless World*, his more recent *The Culture of Narcissism*, and a recent essay in the New York Review of Books — where he, incidentally, condemned the White House Conference on Families — Lasch has developed a complicated and challenging thesis on the harmful effects of the invasion of the family by assorted agencies of the state.

If one were to ask Mr. Lasch the questions posed by this conference — to wit, what should be the role of the state in family life and what should be the role of the family in relation to the state? — he would be likely to answer that the state should keep out of family life and the family out of the state.

His argument, in short, rejects the notion that the liberal state's intervention in the family can do anything but further weaken parental authority and further entrench the power of outside agencies over the lives of families and individuals. In his view, agencies involved with families function with the best of intentions and with the highest of ideals, yet work to undermine the family's internal cohesion and authority. What has emerged over the last century, he argues, is a new form of social control, a control that comes from a whole legion of social workers, psychiatrists, educators, marriage counselors, child development experts, juvenile authorities, and the like. Equally troubling is the form of this control, a form he characterizes as "non-coercive, non-authoritative, and thus manipulative." Rather than naked domination by the state, we have, instead, a form of control masquerading as therapy.

Thus, he decries the "crisis of the family." And he does so because he believes that effort is misguided. The question rather should focus on the harmful impact of state intervention in the family and why such intervention arose. Once this question is adequately answered, the reasons for the malaise of the family will presumably be made more clear. At this point, Lasch's arguments are more exploratory than conclusive — and I doubt whether a group trying to formulate a policy on families finds them very congenial — but they do pose a challenge that deserves attention.

What he is saying is radical and funda-







# The Family and the State

By John B. Orr, Professor of Social Ethics, University of Southern California

Paul Tillich has used the word *kaïros*, a Greek word referring to a time to see and act, to recognize that there is a brief opportunity present for creative action. The family in today's society is in a state of change, offering that society an opportunity to recognize and respond to the changes which are taking place.

For example, we see a picture of isolation due to our mobile society where family members are at great distances from one another. We see a "warehousing" of older members of the family who need special care. We see a rapidly increasing divorce rate, and finally, we see a proliferation of family forms.

We really come to our *kaïros* without much of a consensus, and the huge question that overlays this whole White House effort with regard to family is whether we can be anything more than that. Can anything like a coalition on behalf of the American family emerge in this process? Will we continue to be a kind of accumulation of warring factions, each of us representing particular interests, battling one another for the imagination of the American nation? Can a consensus, can a coalition emerge? It's too soon to be optimistic as to whether any particular issues will surface around which a coalition on behalf of the family can take shape.

Today I want to speak as, frankly, a moralist. I don't want to hide my identity as a academic who is concerned about the relation of values and public policy. I want to raise the question that I think is preliminary to those political questions that dominate, and necessarily so, the White House Conference on the Family: the question of the relationship of the role of the family to the role of the state. That's an abstract question but an important one because it somehow comes out of an undefined uneasiness that we have

about bringing the light of politics to bear on the family. After all, in America the family has been one of the last bastions of privacy. The family has been a place where we have gone, many of us, for relaxation, for enjoyment of intimate relations, for an experience of unvarnished individualism, and there's a certain vague fear that as we turn our attention to the politics of the family, to public policy and the family, perhaps even here the winds of bureaucracy blow. Perhaps even here we'll find ourselves overdefining rights, privileges, obligations, and something which is considered to be most precious — the rights of the citizen standing over and against the rights of the collective — may be lost from our heritage. I don't think we should start talking about the politics of a White House Conference on the Family unless we do give voice to that privatism, that individualism which is so much a part of the American heritage.

We should be aware as we raise this question about the relation of family privacy to the state that this is a very special time in American history. We will necessarily raise the issue in a very different way from that of our mothers and fathers, and certainly, we are going to look at the question of privacy and government very differently from our ancestors of a hundred or two hundred years ago. If our ancestors in the revolutionary era two hundred years ago had faced that question, they undoubtedly would not have felt such paranoia as many of us do today.

Certainly, there was a strong trend in American life among our Puritan ancestors to draw lines between the state and the family, to assert the rights of individuals and family groups as over and against the rights of the state. The paranoia didn't arise, however, because fami-

lies, if we can trust the literature of the period, finally and fundamentally tended to look upon themselves as allies of the state, of the church, and of business. These institutions cooperated together in a kind harmony of interest on behalf of the expansion of the common welfare. Indeed, the public school textbooks coming out of that period tended to talk about the primary function of the home as being the training of citizens, getting people ready for their public roles, and in fact many of those public roles proceeded within the family. The family was still a work place; the family was still a place where mother, father, and the children tended to cooperate together in many of the roles which now, in an industrial and post-industrial society, go on outside of the home, in offices and factories and stores.

Something changed in American life, however, sometime in the 19th century. You can see it in public schoolbooks; you can see it in philosophy texts used to train the teachers who would go out into the public schools in this expansive system of public education that was developing. As father, and sometimes even mother, were taken out of the family as a work place, the family began to be talked about more and more as a place of refuge, a place of intimacy somehow apart from the affairs of the world.

A very creative writer, Anne Douglas, has written a book called *The Feminization of American Culture* and that was just her point — that sometime in that period, early to mid-nineteenth century, the family became a place that was primarily devoted to intimacy, to nurturing of religious emotions, to providing a kind of compensation for the pressures that were being brought on individuals in the outside world, the world of politics, the world of work, the world of "real affairs."

It was in that period that our national paranoia about the relation of the family and the state or the family and industry began to emerge. We became protective of this island of intimacy that was newly separated from the world of everyday

affairs. We valued this island.

Now, to be sure, many people, particularly women, experienced that island of intimacy or privacy as a prison, and we began to get movements in this period that suggested that perhaps the kind of dominance or status that a Mrs. Vanderbilt could achieve in a society devoted to parties was not enough, and that the fulfillment of women could not occur wholly within this enclave separated from the affairs of the world. The island of privacy was under attack at the same time that it was being valued.

It seems, however, that when we raise the question about the state's relation to the family as an island of privacy in the latter part of the 20th century, we are doing it in a different way. Still, many of us when we come to a discussion of the rights of family or experience of the family as a private place, talk the language of the 19th century. Scratch most of us and there's a 19th century woman or man very close beneath the surface. We are nostalgic about family privacy, and even though our families may be scattered to the winds we like to imagine that our families were like that, a kind of intimate island.

We feel guilty about it, try to make it happen; we go on outings and vacations and are disappointed when it doesn't happen because we're nostalgic about that time. But something has changed and because it's happening to us it's hard to date when the change began to occur and to find the words to ask about this new era — when the question about privacy and its relation to public policy began to change.

John Demos, an American historian who for four years has dealt with the American family, has said somewhat confessionally that he finds he thinks of his family not so much as an island of intimacy as a kind of encounter group. That is — and I'll have to confess to a little bit of this myself — the family tends to be valued insofar as its relationships bring out the best in us, help us to be the people that we want to be, help us to be fully

Continued on Page 11

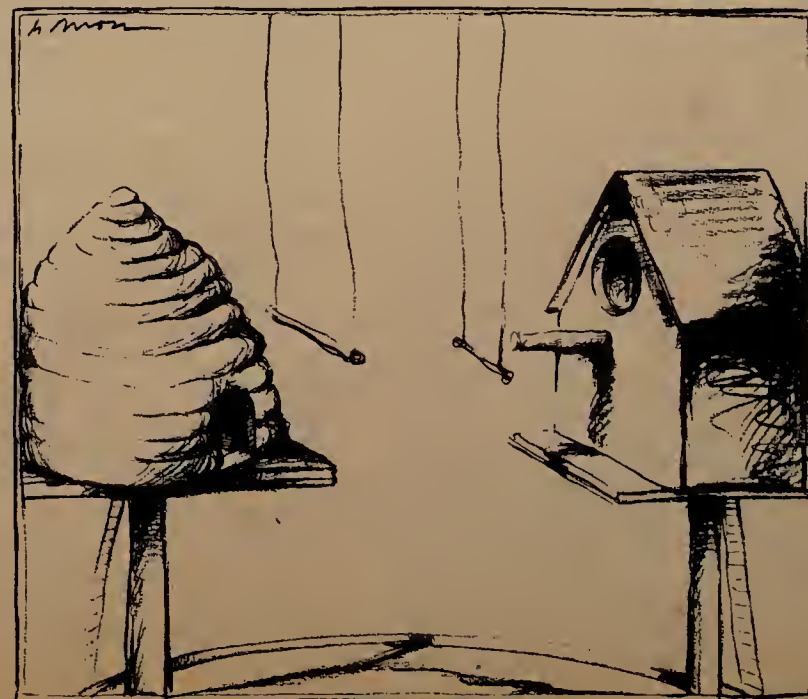
mental. Do various agencies of the state work — despite their good intentions — to undermine personal autonomy and freedom and thus subject individuals to an insidious form of tyranny? Has the family, as he puts it, been besieged by agents of the therapeutic state? Conferences such as this one, in his mind, only perpetuate the crisis, a crisis that ultimately involves the relationship among human freedom, social control, and the capitalist state. While perhaps people here do not want to accept the whole theory or any part of it, Lasch does make us aware that any relationship between the family and the state also involves the issues of freedom and control.

As I said at the beginning of my talk, historians are reluctant to make specific recommendations about matters of public policy. We feel much more comfortable about uncovering long-range trends in demography or shifts in values. Whether history has any special insights to offer about the family in relation to housing, health care, daycare, and transportation problems is unlikely. The same might be said about violence in the family, an issue that has largely escaped the attention of historians, in part because of the difficulty in finding sources of infor-

mation. But such issues may not even be the proper province of historians; perhaps they are better left to sociologists, family therapists, and the like. What I have tried to do is to describe some long term trends, both in the composition of the family and in values within the family. And as my talk should make clear, the historical perspective on families is, at this point, rather mixed.

From the optimistic side, we find historians emphasizing the strength and durability of families, their ability to adapt to new circumstances yet maintain important values. This literature has focused much of its attention on oppressed groups in American society, on industrial workers, immigrants, slaves, and free blacks.

From the more pessimistic side, we have analyses that point out the emergence of a basic clash between family values and individualistic values. The most negative implications here imply a flight from family life and from children in general and a further heightening of the atomized state of American society. Finally, we have the perspective of those who see the family as being undermined by forces who ostensibly seek to help families.



Geoffrey Moss — political illustration syndicated with the Washington Post Writers Group





# Pertinent Perspectives on the Family

## LILLIAN B. RUBIN

Research Associate, Institute for Study of Social Change  
University of California, Berkeley

The work a man does — which effectively defines his family's social class — influences family life well beyond immediate economic realities. For the working-class man, for example, his work life and family life are distinctly separate.

For the middle-class professional, however, the boundary is looser, more penetrable. His family often is an adjunct to his work. His wife entertains his business associates. The important deal often is started, if not finished, in the living room. Indeed, in considering a man for an executive position, many companies interview his wife to be sure she will represent the corporate image adequately.

In addition, the professional man's work brings many rewards. It is intrinsically interesting while also offering high pay, prestige, and a sense of power and authority. When he speaks, others listen.

By comparison, working-class jobs — in a factory, a warehouse, a packing plant, a refinery — offer little if any reward apart from the paycheck. They are low in status, work conditions often are unpleasant, the work itself boring and physically grueling. And who listens when the factory worker speaks?

Perhaps only in the family does the working-class man enter a world where he will be heard. There, because he is "head of the household," he can exercise power, demand obedience, insist that his wishes be respected.

And his wife, sensitive to the dilemmas that face her man — the blocked aspirations, the chronic pain and nagging sense of failure that are the hallmarks of the "hidden injuries of class" — tends to submit in a vain attempt to restore his bruised ego. "He won't let me," she will say often. "Your father knows best," she will remind her children — not because she is docile or passive, but because she understands that nowhere else can her husband experience himself as a person "worth listening to."

The professional man is confident in his authority both at work and at home. Thus he need not rely on an arbitrary authoritarianism to win his way. Moreover, since his wife's social skills are a valued asset in his work, he must allow her a greater measure of freedom. He cannot so easily "tell" her what she can and cannot do.

Does this mean that middle-class marriages are more egalitarian than those in the working class?

The picture is mixed. Certainly the ideology of equality is most often expressed in the middle class. But there frequently is a wide gap between ideology and behavior. One recent study of families in which both mother and father work, for example, reports that middle-class husbands "say" they believe in shar-

ing household chores and child care. But they don't actually "do" much of it.

In working-class families, on the other hand, men often express highly conventional views about the division of labor. But in fact, when their wives are at work, they often prepare meals, clean up, and get the children off to school.

Child-rearing practices and educational philosophy also reflect class differences. Thus, professional middle-class parents, assuming that their children will do work like theirs — work that calls for initiative, flexibility, creativity, and sensitivity to others — raise their children with great concern for developing those skills and call for an educational system that fosters them as well.

Working-class parents, too, assume that their children will work at jobs comparable to their own, jobs in which creativity and initiative are not expected and often not desired. Those who work at such jobs may need, above all, an iron-willed discipline to keep them for their jobs day after day, year after year. Understandably, then, such families stress emotional control, respect, and orderliness in their child rearing, especially for the boys who will hold those jobs, and they demand that schools reinforce those qualities.

Thus does work performed outside the home touch the core of life inside. Whether in child-rearing practices, in educational philosophy, even in the relations among family members, common experiences create common problems which, in turn, lead to common adaptations.

This is the stuff of which culture is born. And so long as the social and economic realities of class exist, we can expect such subcultural variations in family life to persist.

## JOSEPH H. PLECK

Program Director of Family Program  
Wellesley College Center for Research on Women

... Although the wife's contributions to family income appear to give her somewhat more power in making family decisions, the wife's employment does not generally seem to have much effect on marital happiness. However, when there are preschool children or the wife has low education, employed wives report somewhat less happiness.

Nor does the wife's working seem to affect the break-up of marriages. On the one hand, the wife who knows she can earn has more independence, making it easier for her to leave a bad marriage than the wife without a job. On the other hand, wives' earnings improve their families' standard of living, which seems to increase marital stability.

Research has shown that mothers' employment does not, in itself, adversely affect children. Much depends on the mother's attitude and the quality of the care the child receives from her as well as other care-givers. About half of employed

parents with children 12 or under use some childcare arrangement — in someone else's home, in their own home, or in a day care center. Popular attitudes toward the two-earner family have changed in some respects, but not others. Most people now believe that an employed mother can have as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work outside the home. Nevertheless, about 50 percent of wives and 75 percent of husbands in a recent survey agree that "it is best for everyone involved if the man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home."

This ambivalence in popular attitudes is reflected as well in public policies regarding child care, income taxes, and social security. Paradoxically, the United States is one of the most advanced countries in its governmental equal opportunity policy for women, but is simultaneously one of the least advanced in its provision of supports, such as childcare services, for employed mothers (and their partners).

## PHILIP SLATER

Sociologist, lecturer and author

... Children are much less influenced by our theories and techniques of child rearing than by the kind of people we are and the way we behave in the world.

Americans have never been able to offer their children the unchanging environment that authoritarianism requires. From the first landings to the present day, Americans have lived amid chronic change and mobility, hoping always that their children would be better adapted to the environment than they themselves. This has lent a tentativeness and self-doubt to their child-rearing efforts.

American "narcissism," or self-centeredness, is also a venerable tradition. Our country was settled mostly by people who valued their own economic welfare more than their communities.

As a society, we encourage selfishness. We expect people to be interested primarily in their private or family welfare, with little concern for community needs. The care of the sick, old, disturbed, or poor, for example — a task that most societies take for granted — is carried out grudgingly, carelessly, or not at all.

The narcissism of the 1970s differed from the narcissism of the 1920s or 1950s only in style: our obsession with personal wealth, personal possessions, personal power, and personal fame was broadened to embrace personal pleasures, personal psychological or spiritual development, and personal relationships. Both sets of goals are private, "selfish." We are simply more used to economic selfishness.

All these strivings are expressions of what we call "individualism" — a belief system that denies that human beings are interdependent and influence each other with every action they take. It is one of



Geoffrey Moss — political illustrator syndicated with the Washington Post Writers Group

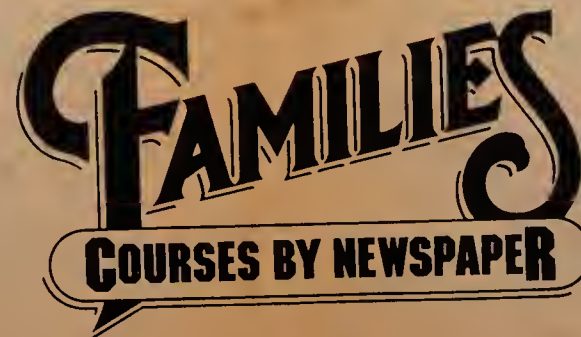
The statements on these pages were taken from articles written for the series "Families in Transition" presented by Courses by Newspaper, a project supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and coordinated at the University of California at San Diego. Thirty-four newspapers throughout California carry the series, which began this month, and 14 community colleges offer credit to readers who register for the course and fulfill other requirements. Supplementary materials are also available.

our strongest illusions.

The Great Depression and World War II were heavy blows to this illusion, for they indicated that our destinies were interlocked. Our confusion as a nation was captured in the film "Casablanca," in which an American businessman, wallowing in the private poignancy of an unhappy love affair, is finally forced to involve himself in the collective suffering around him.

The postwar era saw a mammoth reaction against this brief flirtation with collectivism. Americans retreated enthusiastically into "private life." Men sought personal security and self-esteem in their jobs. Women sought it in child rearing, with unprecedented intensity.

Child rearing throughout history, for all but a privileged few, has been an occasional activity, attended to only as leisure from survival chores permitted. Now, for the first time, child rearing became a self-conscious, full-time, top-priority activity on a mass scale. Books on child care were eagerly devoured, as mothers — abandoning jobs and other interests — channeled their aborted ambitions into the attempt to raise perfect, well-rounded children.



## CATHERINE STIMPSON

Professor of English  
Douglass College, Rutgers University

... Feminists disagree about the family. Some declare it obsolete: machines will replace mothers as the rearers of children. Others predict that the family will change, but we will not abandon stable, intimate groups in which different generations live together.

A few also assert that the bond between mother and child is a unique mingling of nature and nurture, of physiology, psychology, and culture. Others, far greater in number, argue that fathers as well as mothers, communal groups as well as the family, can love and parent children.

However, feminists have reached a rough consensus on other questions. They reason that women ought to claim their share of human freedom. They ought to be able to decide, without paying a social price, if and when they will become mothers. They ought to be able to choose, without penalty, whether they will be heterosexual or not.

Constructing a family ethic, the women's movement endorses the principle of equality. It assumes that adults who live together ought equitably to share pleasure and power, love and domestic duties, delight and drudgery.

Paradoxically, more and more women who do not call themselves feminists are now acting on some feminist principles in their everyday lives. Over a third of all American women now hold full-time jobs. In both the public sphere of the outside world and the private sphere of the home, women are finding egalitarianism more attractive.

Although most women still favor marriage, over half believe that being a parent is not essential for marital happiness.

## CAROL TAVRIS

Freelance writer and editor

... Sexual attitudes and acts are reflections of the social and economic order. For virtually all of human history, the unpredictability of pregnancy and the consequence of pregnancy to the woman, her family, and the tribal unit, meant that a network of rules had to be established. When births could not be controlled, women had to be.

Social scientists, studying the varieties of sexual roles around the world, find that standards of sexual freedom or repressiveness have their origin in non-sexual events. Some societies, such as those throughout Polynesia, permit both boys and girls to have sex before marriage. Other societies restrict both sexes. Still others give license to boys, but punish girls for sexual activity.

Why the different rules? Anthropologist Ernestine Friedl finds that permissiveness occurs in societies that do not

require large-scale property exchanges at marriage, that is, where marriage is not an economic alliance between families. When weddings involve high bride prices or dowries, a high premium is placed on a girl's virginity. As marriage evolves away from being a means of property exchange, with women as the unit of currency, the premium on female virginity fades, as it has in the United States.

Economic alliances produce low expectations. If the husband does his job (makes money), and the wife does hers (makes babies), it is a happy marriage. But emotional alliances take the ceiling off expectations: subjective standards for a happy marriage are almost impossible to achieve constantly. Add to this subjective standards for sexual happiness, and the "powder keg" of the sexual revolution is lit. If sex isn't a duty, then it must be a delight; and if it isn't a delight, what am I doing here?

## MILTON COVENSKY

Professor of History  
Wayne State University, Indiana

In a service economy the family shifts more and more from a long-term production unit to short-run consumption center.

Consumption and the consumer mentality become all important. Instead of producing a major part of its own entertainment, the family voraciously consumes entertainment provided by the mass media — television, movies, radio, mass newspapers, and popular magazines. Much time is spent consuming sports events and popular music, while Nielsen estimates that children watch an average of almost 25 hours of television each week.

Further evidence of the consumption mentality is the American family's use of energy, which is higher per household unit than anywhere else in the world.

The service economy feeds and reinforces the family as a consumption center, and vice versa. The supermarket is an institutionalized means of maximizing the food consumption of American families. Conversely, the need for "gratification now" promotes the proliferation of supermarkets, fast food chains, microwave ovens, frozen foods, and instant coffee, tea, and soups. The service economy also provides an apparatus of service agents such as consumer representatives and environmental protection surveillants, who ostensibly protect the interests of the family.

The spectacular computer and electronics revolution advances the service economy and the family as a consumption center. The rise of instant credit, instant foods, instant news, instant TV movies, places an inordinate emphasis on the family's need to consume rather than to produce. The American family is, accordingly, more and more "now" oriented with a deep need to find quick, present gratification.

This tendency is also promoted by the search for models in the present rather than in past time. In earlier periods children could emulate their parents or grandparents as models in time. Today, they increasingly find their models among "ideals" — who are present idols — rock stars, pop artists, current movie stars, pen pals, environmentalists, and ephemeral "gurus"...

The increasing secularization of modern life in industrial and post-industrial society poses a major threat to the contemporary family. It promotes both a loss of the sacred in the world and a loss of authority and authority figures.

In a sacred world there are holy spaces, times, events, and persons that are inviolable and relatively immune from attack. In contemporary society it is becoming ever more difficult to find areas of the sacred. Marriage is no longer a sacred institution. Parents are decreasingly sacred figures to their children. The home is increasingly subject to terror, crime, and domestic disruption. Even the inviolability of the individual person as a human being with moral rights is under serious threat, as evidenced by meaningless muggings, rapes, and other violent attacks.

Meanwhile authority figures — the police and military, teachers, and parents are suffering a serious loss of their authority, both in image and in substance. A paramount problem for contemporary society is thus to provide a sense of authority and the sacredness of institutions, such as the family. This may need to be accomplished either within a religious framework, a humanistic framework that emphasizes the dignity and worth of all human beings, or both.

## CATHERINE CHILMAN

School of Social Welfare  
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Although there is widespread agreement that many American families are in trouble, there is little consensus about what should be done to help them.

The inner world of the family is a small, interpersonal system that interacts with the larger bureaucratic systems. What happens to part of the family, for instance a severe conflict between husband and wife, will not only have reverberations throughout the family system, but it will probably also affect the behavior of each family member in transactions with the larger world of work, school, and community.

Similarly, actions of the larger environmental system make a strong impact on families and frequently upset the well-being of the total family group. These larger systems, such as the organizations for which parents work, tend to be oblivious of the needs of the family as an interpersonal system. For example, employers often require that employees work overtime, regardless of the effects on family obligations and relationships.



## Grants Awarded Public Policy

### ASIAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Sponsors: Regents of University of California; Asian American Public Policy Program (consortium of the Asian Studies Departments at UCLA, University of Southern California, and California State University, Long Beach)

A two-day conference will explore historical and contemporary issues in Asian immigration to California and the United States. Bringing together humanists, social scientists, policy analysts, and members of the public who are concerned about existing immigration and refugee policies and laws, the meeting will promote interdisciplinary understanding and move toward coherence in the disparate concerns raised by immigration issues.

Four major keynote addresses and 12 panel discussion sessions will examine policy issues ranging from the massive backlog of immigration petitions in Asian countries to the impact of Asian immigration on race and labor relations in California. Panelists will come from all over the state and will represent a wide diversity of Asian ethnicities and nationalities.

### CENTRE CITY: FOCUS FOR A CHANGING COMMUNITY

Sponsor: American Institute of Architects, San Diego Chapter

A videotape will be developed to narrate the changing history of San Diego's downtown area, focusing on the shifting ethnic and commercial nature of the area, and on the periods of crucial alteration such as the years close to the opening of the Panama Canal. The social and value changes during these periods will be compared to the values and choices affecting the current dynamics of redevelopment. Humanist scholars, community representatives and media professionals will work together on a script to include diverse points of view—commercial, preservationist, ethnic, native inhabitants, scholars from the arts, social sciences and literature.

The videotape will be used as a resource for meetings of community, professional media and business organizations.

### ELECCIONES '80

Sponsor: Bilingual Broadcasting Productions, San Jose

The sponsor will produce a series of weekly bilingual election reports for the three months prior to the November general election, with commentary and analysis of issues particularly relevant to the Latino community. Speakers will address major national, state, and regional issues, and assess candidates and their positions on these issues. Scholars in history, language and linguistics, cultural anthropology, and sociology, will join journalists, legislative staff members, media professionals and political consultants in discussing employment, immigration, energy, education and housing, as they concern both Latino citizens and the general radio audience. Wide distribution is planned to Spanish and English public and commercial radio stations.

### CULTURAL & ETHICAL VALUES & PUBLIC POLICY IN THE 80'S

Sponsor: Pomona College Program in Public Policy Analysis, supported by the California Journal and Coro Foundation Associates

A nine-month dialogue between humanists and policy-makers will take two forms: (1) a series of five colloquies on ethics and policy-making, involving humanists from the Claremont Colleges, policymakers from Sacramento, and community affairs activists from the Los Angeles area, and the general public; (2) a group of 14-18 representatives of the groups above, who will attend workshops in Sacramento at key times to watch the legislature at work.

The theme of the program is the relationship of cultural and ethical values and public policy in the 1980's, focusing in particular on the importance of leadership (historically and today), Jewish-Christian ethics as they are reflected in our political action, and the potential contribution of scholars in the humanities to the policy process. A series of lectures, monographs and articles are to be developed by academic participants, and the California Journal will publish an article which results from the Sacramento workshops.

### WHO OWNS THE PAST?

Sponsor: Northridge Archaeological Research Center

At a time when Ventura County appears to be entering an era of exploding growth, much is being learned about the Chumash Indians who were once the only inhabitants. Archaeological resources are being discovered whose preservation conflicts with the plans of agricultural, industrial, and housing developers. American Indians, conservationists and archaeologists are pitted against farmers, land owners and construction workers.

A slide/tape presentation containing interviews representing all sides of the question will be used as the basis for a series of public meetings where the relative values of development and preservation will be discussed. Scholars from the humanities will raise such issues as the impact on a culture of the destruction of its past, and the responsibilities as well as rights that accrue to the ownership of property, both individual and corporate. Holders of small plots of land on which archaeological resources found will describe the changes in plans brought about by the discoveries. Five public discussions are scheduled, distributed geographically throughout the county.

### "MATTERS SO FUNDAMENTAL"

Sponsor: San Francisco Women's Center

A 16 mm., 55-minute, color documentary film will examine the issue of abortion, looking at both pro-life and pro-choice arguments and at the larger societal context of human values about family and gender roles which fuel the debate. Filming will take place at the National Right-to-Life Convention at Disneyland

in June and the White House Conference on the Family Regional Meeting in Los Angeles in July. Convention and conference participants will also be interviewed in their homes and communities, and additional interviews will take place with organizers on both sides of the issue, legislators, doctors, health care professionals, scholars in history, philosophy, literature, and religious ethics. Through the abortion issue the film will raise larger questions of how our society wants to bring up children, nurture its families and create meaningful relationships, in the midst of changing economic and social conditions and values.

### THE CALIFORNIA TRANSLATION: THE PERSPECTIVES OF CALIFORNIA WOMEN ON THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT TOWARD THE EQUAL SOCIETY

Sponsor: Global Community Network and Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women

California women will have the opportunity to discuss five public policy issues of importance to diverse groups of women in the state, in the context of international views on the same issues, and in a model congress format. The three international themes: Peace, Development, and Equality, have given rise to local questions; Should women be drafted? Should California enact a code of corporate conduct requiring affirmative action of California businesses in improving the status of women in the economy? Should abortion and sterilization be equally available? Would the voucher system of funding public education benefit women? Should comparable work produce equal pay? Presentation of international perspectives on each issue will precede the local discussions. Scholars from philosophy, political science, jurisprudence, ethics, history, anthropology, classics and literature will help to plan the program and contribute to the discussion and debate on the issues.

### SCAG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Sponsor: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The fall meeting of the SCAG General Assembly which is attended primarily by city and county officials from the six Southland counties, will feature a mock trial of California's current legislative reapportionment process. Scholars in the humanities will serve as "witnesses" to discuss the historical and philosophical aspects of the redistricting process which will be facing the state again at the first of next year. Other participants will play the parts of historical and symbolic characters with varying views on the issues of district formation. Elected officials will serve as judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney, with the audience acting as jury and actually voting to condemn or absolve the present reapportionment system, on the basis of such considerations as the nature of equality underlying the concept of representative government, the success or failure of one-man, one-

vote in producing greater equality for citizens, and the potential of reform for assuring "fair representation." The trial will be open to the public.

### "ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN . . . ?" — A CRITICAL LOOK AT MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE AND THE BODY POLITICK

Sponsor: Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute, Berkeley

A weekend symposium will explore and analyze the effects of political blacklisting, through loyalty oath requirements and hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee in California during the 1950's, upon individuals, organizations and institutions of the time. Panelists will include both victims/survivors of McCarthyism and scholars whose studies concentrate on the period, and will look at education and research, trade unionism, the arts and popular culture, political parties, the civil rights movement, and attitudes toward U.S. foreign policy, as influenced by the political climate.

Professors of Constitutional Jurisprudence, American Art, Literature, History, and Political Science, together with legislators and members of the public will consider how far the state can require political conformity of its employees and of its citizens in general, and whether persons who lost their jobs through the loyalty programs of the fifties are entitled to compensation. The symposium will also include a special assembly, a film, and exhibits of lithographs and historical documents.

### TECHNOLOGY AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE FUTURE: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES

Sponsor: California State University, Chico

A series of presentations, workshops and forums will address the project topic in three major divisions: (1) certain social concerns which arise out of modern technological society; (2) the economic framework which underlies these social problems; and (3) a philosophical and historical background for analyzing these problems. Broad categories for discussion will consider the individual in relation to state and government policy, the corporation, and him/herself. A debate will be held between two prominent public figures on the free-enterprise system vs. a controlled economy as background to the broader question of whether social problems should be handled by individual activity or government intervention. Philosophers and economists will apply the concepts of alienation and technological change in contemporary society to discussion of a number of specific local social questions. The program will supplement a Fine Arts Festival taking place simultaneously on the Chico State campus and addressing the quality of life in the future from its own perspective.





## Local & Cultural History/Planning

### THE MYTHS BEFORE LOS ANGELES

Sponsor: VOICES (a public, non-profit radio production group), Pasadena

A series of one-hour radio programs will be planned around the three most significant indigenous American mythologies that relate to the Los Angeles area, either because they originate with local peoples or are a part of the roots of a large segment of the Los Angeles population. The myths presented will be Cahuilla, Chumas, and pre-Columbian Mexican. They will be structured as oral narratives, dialogues, or radio dramas and interspersed with commentaries by Native Americans, Mexican-Americans and scholars in the humanities who will discuss the history and cultures of the people who created the myths, the function of myth, and the interrelationships among the myths selected. The project will be part of the celebration of the Los Angeles Bicentennial.

### BEHIND THE CAMERA: THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MOTION PICTURE LABOR

Sponsor: The Film Fund, Santa Monica

A documentary film will present the story of Hollywood's motion picture craft unions during the thirties and forties when bitter strikes, interunion jurisdictional disputes, and corrupt union officials with ties to prominent gangsters marked the relationship between movie producers and the men and women who worked behind the camera in the labs, scenery mills, cutting rooms, offices, projection booths and sound stages. The forties also include World War II and the strikes that followed it.

Labor historians will consult with experts in film making and its history to produce a script that will show the viewpoints of both management and labor, the many ideologies represented and the many separate unions involved. The film is expected to air on public television.

### LA GENTE DE CALIFORNIA — THE SPANISH SPEAKING PEOPLE

Sponsor: Cine Accion, San Francisco

A one-hour documentary film for television will portray the history of the Spanish-speaking people of California and their interactions with other ethnic groups, relating these to the present conditions of Hispanics in California and seeking a wider understanding of the issues involved. Beginning with the arrival of Spanish-speaking immigrants to California and the patterns of economic, social and political structure they brought with them, the film will contrast these with the existing Indian system found when they arrived. It will look at the changes introduced when the Gold Rush brought a population explosion of Anglos, turning the Hispanic majority into a minority, substituting English for Spanish as the dominant language, and introducing a new social and legal system. Professors of history, architecture, music, literature and anthropology will serve as consultants in the preparation of the script.

### THE BERKELEY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Sponsors: KALX Radio, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley Historical Society

A pilot radio program will result from about 30 interviews of Berkeley citizens who took part in and recall significant issues and events in the history of the city. A series of programs will be planned to record and broadcast the full spectrum of Berkeley's social, cultural, political, economic, ethnic and scientific heritage. Scholars in history, literature and political philosophy will both serve as advisors on the content of the programs and as participants sharing their insights into the community. Other resource people will come from many different walks of life in the city.

### CALIFORNIA'S MISSION REVIVAL STYLE: EXHIBIT, LECTURES & TOURS

Sponsor: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association

A traveling photographic exhibit with accompanying lecture series and directions for self-guided tours in many communities throughout the state will focus public attention on the Mission Revival style of architecture and relate it to periods in the history of the state which it reflects. Scholars in history, archaeology, art and architectural history, cultural anthropology and literature will participate.

The exhibit will follow the evolution of the style from its inception in the 18th century Franciscan missions, their decay, their romanticization, restoration and mass popularization in the revival period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It will show the style's highly conscious inclusion in every sort of building, the transition into the variegated Spanish Colonial Revival phase, and fanciful contemporary uses. The significance of the Mission Revival style in supporting the attempts of Californians at establishing roots in an immigrant state will be demonstrated, as well as its role in expressing the state's identity.

### THE CALIFORNIA RENAISSANCE: THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY CULTURE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Sponsor: The Institute for Historical Study, San Francisco

Lectures, exhibitions, panel discussions, media presentations and performances will culminate in a film for public television focusing on individuals and groups who personified a flowering of California culture around the year 1900. It will identify roots of contemporary art and thought, documenting the historical continuity that links present day concepts to those of the past. Citing the work of such Californians as Gertrude Stein, Jack London, Bernard Maybeck, Isadora Duncan and John Muir, the project will narrate their contributions to a form of naturalism that fused art and life style and worked to live in harmony with nature and to seek identity beyond accepted social conventions. Key resource scholars will work with members of the community who lived through the era and participated in the arts at that time.

### GASLAMP QUARTER VIDEOTAPE

Sponsors: KPBS-TV, San Diego, in cooperation with the Gaslamp Quarter Association and the University of San Diego

The Gaslamp Quarter was once the heart of downtown San Diego, founded as "New Town" in 1867, and containing hotels, banks, shops, saloons, theaters, wholesale warehouses, department stores and small factories. Many of these buildings still exist and are being restored and renovated for new uses after having

fallen into decay as the city expanded outward.

A videotape will document the birth, growth, decline and current rebirth of the area, defining the sense of community that once existed and is now being recreated, and showing what has been accomplished through the cooperative effort of the private and public sectors. Using historical photographs, live photography, interviews and music, the 28-minute videotape will strengthen the sense of history and identity in the city and inform those who are unaware of the origins and course of development in San Diego.

### THE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Sponsors: Pacifica Foundation/KPFA Radio

A series of radio programs will document the history of women in the San Francisco Bay Area, from Native American women of the 18th century to women of the present day. Scholars in history and literature will help to select materials and act as advisors in all phases of the project. Oral histories, diaries, letters, and overland journals assembled from the archives of the Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library and the California History Society will be interwoven with commentary from scholars, dramatizations of historical events and music from the period presented. Written articles, lectures, and photographic exhibits will supplement and publicize the radio series.

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE PEOPLE: THE CENTENNIAL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN ONTARIO-MONTCLAIR

Sponsor: Ontario-Montclair Elementary School District

This planning grant will support a series of monthly meetings to design a centennial observance that will highlight the historical relationship between the community and the schools, and that will involve community members and students working together. Such topics as the history and growth of school district busing, multicultural and bilingual education, changing curricula, district employment practices, district expansion, parent and adult education, will be explored for their record of successes and failure, achievements and disappointments, and their implications for the future education of the children in the community.

Local scholars in anthropology, California history, American Indian studies, history of education, Chicano studies, and history of American women in the west will meet with specialists in many areas of public education, members of the Ontario-Montclair Board of Education, and prominent members of the community to plan the events and information that will celebrate the centennial.



From a project sponsored by the League of Women Voters of San Francisco



Value and the American Family

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# HUMANITIES NETWORK

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### COMING DEADLINES:

September 30, 1980  
 Local & Cultural History  
 Public Radio & TV

October 31, 1980  
 Public Policy

TEN copies of all proposals must arrive in the San Francisco office by the date due.

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